



STONEWALL NEWS

STONEWALL DEMOCRATIC CLUB, SACRAMENTO

FALL 2005

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Presidents Address

By Dr. Darrick Lawson, President Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento

Let me first start by thanking each of you for the honor of leading such an amazing group as your president. It has truly been an honor to serve the club as its Vice President since its beginning. And as you have heard us say so many times, look at all we've accomplished in 2 short years. Well, in September the Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento will turn three. So Happy Birthday to us.

Truly, we have accomplished a lot! The leadership of Dan Roth and the work of not only our previous boards, but also many volunteers have resulted in the voice of our LGBT community not only being heard, but being sought. We were recently honored by having State Treasurer and candidate for governor Phil Angelides speak at our club meeting. We will be honored on September 12th, by having State Controller and candidate for governor Steve Westly speak. Our local leaders look to Stonewall, as not only a voice for the LGBT community, but as a force that puts people in office. We are Sacramento's largest Democratic Club, and although we focus on LGBT issues, that status puts us in the position of needing to take off our "one issue" glasses, and clearly see our role as a voice for all Democratic issues.

We do have much to celebrate. We have over 400 members and our second annual Four Freedoms Dinner was an extraordinary success. However, because the forces of hatred and bigotry will not be silent, we also have much work to do. First, we have a special election coming up that I believe is the most poorly understood and underestimated battle in politics we've seen in decades. Let me be clear, there is much to lose in this election. Are there any gay issues on that ballot? No! So why do we care? Because this election is a direct attack on all Democrats. An attack on all who seek equality and justice for working families, for those who protect us such as our firefighters and police. Again, why do we care?

Here's what is at stake: Proposition 73 requires a waiting period and parental notification for minors considering reproductive options and is another attack on women's right to choose. Proposition 74 would make it impossible for a teacher to get union protection until they have been employed for 5 years. Proposition 75 would significantly limit the ability of unions to make contributions to candidates for public office. This one is critical. It is the unions who help Democrats to compete with the large corporate dollars given to Republicans. If this issue alone passes, we could see losses to the radical right in all future elections. Proposition 76 would end education guarantees which destroys our future generations, subsequently destroying our future as a community. Proposition 77 would redistrict California in a way that would insure Republican wins resulting in us becoming a red state. Proposition 78 is Governor Schwarzenegger's gift to pharmaceutical companies insuring their coffers get even fuller and allowing them to continue to support Republican candidates.

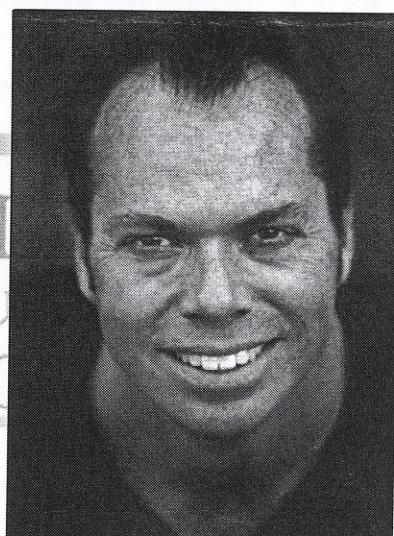
Sure, we should all turn out and vote no on thesees initiative, but how much more do we really need to get involved? Here's why if it's not already clear enough. This set of initiatives is clearly a direct assault against our Democratic values. It is driven by a governor who clearly is not moderate but is using his office to strike at the heart of all we hold sacred. Governor Schwarzenegger is trying to pay back his "friends" on the right by striking at the heart of our party. And we must stand with our allies like never before.

Do you really want to know why we should help in this fight? Because this month, the Secretary of State approved 2 initiatives for circulation that would result in a constitutional amendment banning marriage for same sex couples and also repealing all domestic partner benefits. This will hit the ballot in the spring or fall of next year. If anyone of these passes, we will see 20 years of civil rights work for the LGBT community completely lost. You will lose the right to visit your dying partner in the hospital, lose protection for children of LGBT families, and lose the ability to receive inheritance and insurance benefits.



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How do you think we can fight this initiative? By ourselves? Absolutely not! We will need our friends who are being directly attacked by Propositions 73 to 78. We must remember that it is because of our Democratic friends that we enjoy Domestic Partnerships in California. It is our duty to support those who have supported us. Remember, Stonewall fought hard to become Sacramento's largest Democratic Club. So while our primary mission is to advance the rights of the LGBT community and work to elect gay and gay friendly candidates, we are also a Democratic Club. Therefore, we will stand and fight for all Democratic values. So we fight not just for gay and lesbian issues but we will and must fight alongside our allies because the governor wants to hurt children. We fight because the governor wants to hurt working families. We fight because it is the right thing to do.

Stonewall is working with the Alliance for a Better California and other groups who are organizing to make sure none of these initiatives win. We want each member of Stonewall to work with us to walk precincts, register themselves and all of their friends and coworkers as permanent absentee voters. We want you to volunteer your time to phone bank. We want you to dig deep and write checks. We want you to get involved. Please contact us to get specific marching orders.

Again, this time is critical. Like never before, political or not, this is the time to make your voice heard. This is the time to show yourself and your community that each voice makes a difference. Just take a moment to consider the consequences of a loss. We really could see the entire state taken over by right wing bigots and haters of fairness and equal rights for all. Now, take a moment and imagine the consequences of our defeating all these initiatives. Governor Schwarzenegger would be humiliated with this big of a loss. We could see a Democrat again as governor of California. We would have the momentum to be the first state to successfully fight and beat back a direct assault on the LGBT community. And see that same momentum spread across our nation so that all of the LGBT community would enjoy the benefit of being considered a true equals.

Dr. Darrick Lawson, Stonewall President

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

Listen up boys and girls. Next year in June or November, California voters are going to be making major decisions about your life.

The issue will be debated in fairly simple terms: should the existing limitation of marriage to one-man-one-woman be added to the state constitution?

Two versions of a constitutional amendment to limit marriage are being pushed by signature gatherers right now. (Why two versions? It seems there was some disagreement on how best to phrase their bigotry. One version is more hideous than the other, in that it specifies that the "best interest" of the child is a one-man-one-woman household. But make no mistake, both versions slam the LGBT community and take swipes at unmarried hets as well.) In the end, one of these beauties will be on the ballot next year.

This will be a decisive battle in the culture wars. Victory or loss will impact your life far beyond the marriage question.

If we lose, 20 years of work for our civil rights will be down the drain. Our status as second class citizens will be enshrined in the California Constitution. Marriage discrimination will be raised to the constitutional level. It would take another ballot initiative to take it out.

If we lose, domestic partnerships will have no meaning. All the rights and responsibilities of marriage would be "preserved" exclusively for married opposite sex couples. So you can get a nice symbolic certificate and no legal recognition, no protections, no coverage under the law. Tens of thousands of couples who have registered as domestic partners would lose real benefits.

If we lose, our relationships become invisible. We would become strangers in the eyes of the law. Again.

If we lose, do you really think they will stop? Do you really think the laws protecting your rights on the job won't be challenged? Do you really think that the laws protecting you as a tenant won't be targeted? Do you really think your freedoms to socialize at gay bars won't be threatened? Do you really think they want you walking around loud and proud?

This constitutional amendment battle is about more than marriage. It's about the closet. They want you to get in and shut up.

If we lose, the bigots win.

Get involved now.

Laurie McBride

FUNDRAISER NEWS:

Stonewall's Second Annual Four Freedoms Dinner an Incredible Success

Stonewall's second annual Four Freedom's Dinner was the buzz of Sacramento on July 30. It was a packed house at the CSUS Alumni center as close to 250 people gathered to honor leaders in the LGBT community. Between speeches, guests could bid on over 100 silent auction items, ranging from Monarch Tickets to private lunches with elected officials to dates with eligible Sacramento singles.

"This event is successful because of the caliber of people who we honor," said Dr. Darrick Lawson, President of the Stonewall Democratic Club. "I want to especially thank our dinner chair Ron Spingarn and his partner David Troxel who worked tirelessly over the last several months to make this night so memorable and special for all those who attended."

The Four Freedoms is in honor of a speech that President Franklin Roosevelt delivered in 1941 in which he articulated the four fundamental American freedoms: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Fear, and Freedom from Want. Stonewall honors four local individuals or groups who exemplify these freedoms for the LGBT community as well as a national activist who receives the Four Freedoms Award, Stonewall's highest honor.

This year's honorees were leaders in the LGBT community who continuously sacrifice of themselves to better the lives of gays and lesbians in Sacramento and throughout California.

The evening began with Sacramento's Empress 32 Teryn Thru-U as she performed, "I Just Want To Dance." Immediately the guests knew this was not going to be your average Democratic dinner.

Gayiel Von brought the house down as she sang "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" to pay tribute to all the honorees.

The first award was the Freedom of Worship Award, which was presented to the Reverend Charles Cooper, who is a pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church in Sacramento. The Reverend Cooper preaches God's love for all people and uses song as a means to bring people together.

The second award was the Freedom of Speech award, for which Gayiel Von wrote a special song for her dear friend and a major power-house in the LGBT community, Marghe Covino. Marghe has been a constant fighter for civil rights, from registering black voters in the South during the 1960s to working with minority communities so they will support equal rights for the LGBT community.

After a superb dinner catered by our own Refer-A-Chef, Gary Miller took to the stage to receive the Freedom From Fear Award. Gary was the first openly gay elected official elected in the Sacramento area when he beat back the Christian Right to win a seat on the Robla School Board. His colleagues on the Board have elected him President nine times, and Gary is a living testament that gays and lesbians do not have to live in fear and can run for office openly and win.

To honor Paul Curtis, the Freedom from Want Awardee, Empress Teryn Thru-U performed her trademark song "U-G-L-Y" while images flashed for the audience of policy makers such as former Senator Jesse Helms and President George Bush, whose silence or actions have led to more people becoming HIV positive or who cut HIV-AIDS services. Paul has been a leader in Sacramento for those living with HIV and AIDS. He has served on the Capital City AIDS Fund Board, helped start the Sacramento AIDS walk, and served as President of the Board for the CARES clinic.

Following a live auction officiated by Dennis Mangers and Teryn Thru-U that featured private lunches with Fabian Nunez, the Speaker of the California State Assembly and esteemed Democratic political consultant Gary South as well as trips to Maui and a time share in the Caribbean.

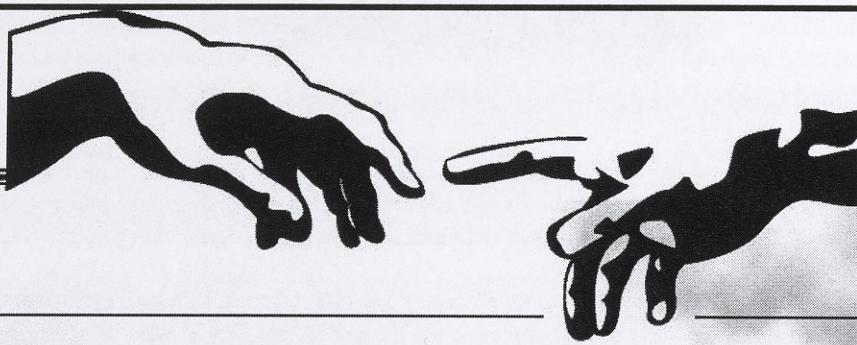
To close the evening off Chrissy Gephardt received the Four Freedoms Award. Chrissy is the openly gay daughter of former Congressman and Democratic Majority Leader Dick Gephardt. When her father decided to run for President in 2004, she campaigned for him in Iowa. After he dropped out of the race, she traveled throughout the United States fundraising and organizing LBGT Democratic voters.

"I am looking forward to next year's dinner," said Clif Hagstedt, who recently joined Stonewall. "Between bidding on auction items and listening to great speeches, I had a great time."

By the time the evening was over, the Four Freedoms Dinner brought in over \$40,000 and was highlighted in the Sacramento Bee.

"The event came together beautifully," said Ron Spingarn, who was the Four Freedoms Dinner Chair. "For everyone who donated an auction item, attended, bought raffle tickets, volunteered or donated to Stonewall I want to thank you. The dinner will ensure that we continue to elect qualified Democrats who support equal rights for the LGBT community."

Dan Roth



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Dr. Darrick Lawson

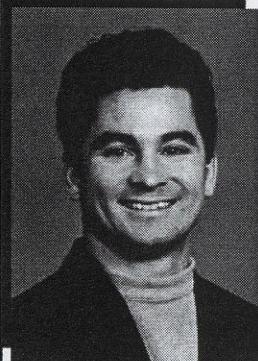
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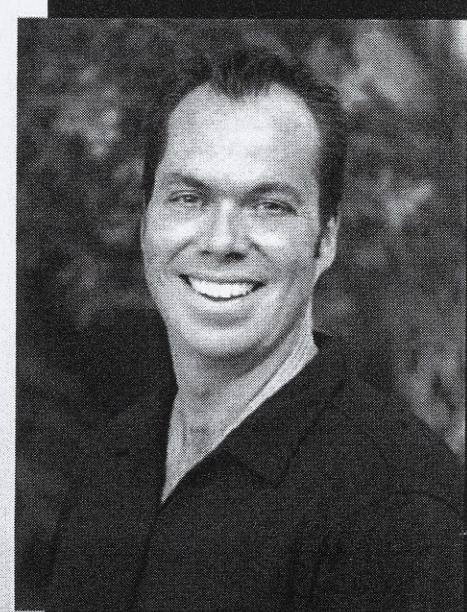
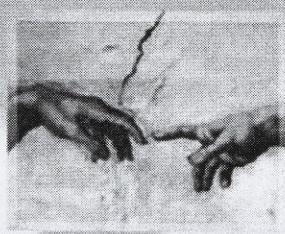
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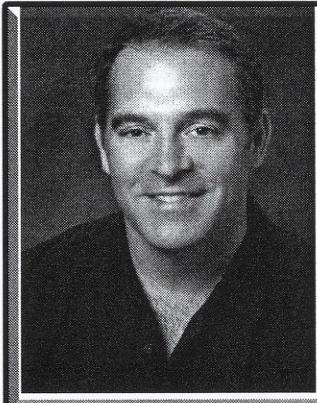
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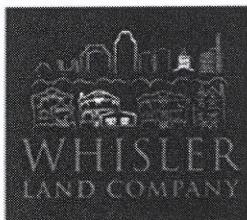
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*Many Thanks, Susan Patterson
SMUD Board member*

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*Shira Davida, Ari, Rashi
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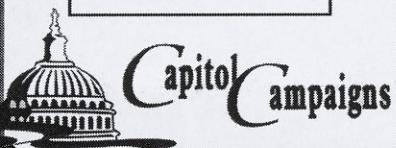
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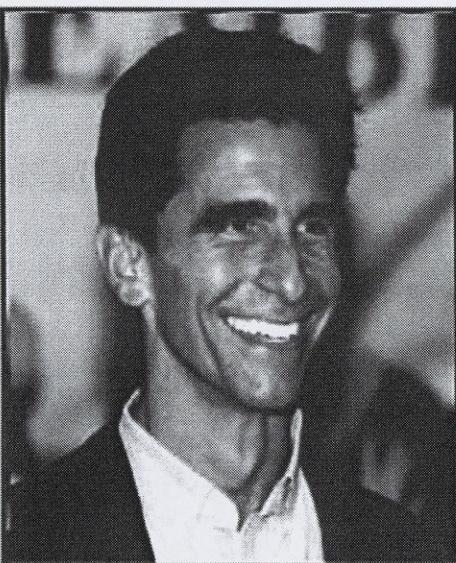
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Assemblyman Mark Leno**

INTERVIEW WITH DARRELL STEINBERG, FORMER ASSEMBLY MEMBER AND CANDIDATE FOR STATE SENATE

In July, 2002 the California Journal wrote that, "Darrell Steinberg approaches everything with integrity. You don't get the feeling he makes decisions based on campaign contributions...his work has a strong intellectual appeal."

Sitting down with Darrell Steinberg two things are instantly noticeable: his popularity as people come to say hello to him and his passion for public policy.

Darrell Steinberg was elected to the Sacramento City Council in 1992 and to the California State Assembly in 1998. He was forced out of the Assembly in 2004 due to term limits. He is currently running for the State Senate seat that will be vacated by Deborah Ortiz in 2006.

"The campaign is going great," Darrell told me when we recently sat down to talk about his race and politics in Sacramento.

Darrell described the Senate District as a "moderately safe Democratic district," and he has been campaigning for the seat for just over a year. He has no opposition thus far in the race, but he is not taking anything for granted.

When I asked Darrell what he wanted to accomplish if he is elected to the Senate he told me he wanted to work on "more of what he did when in the Assembly." He "took the Phil Isenberg approach to legislating and "focused on a few things that were not getting a lot of attention and made his mark there."

As an Assembly member, Darrell chaired the two most powerful committees, Assembly Appropriation and Budget. He had 70 bills signed into law in 6 years. These bills increased the number of qualified teachers in low-performing schools and began reforming California's mental health system.

Indeed Darrell's largest and most enduring contribution was the passage of Proposition 63, which will raise an estimated \$1.8 billion for mental health services in California.

Darrel and I talked about marriage equality and how the issue impacted the 2004 elections.

"John Kerry did not lose because of gay marriage," Darrell said. "Kerry lost Ohio because the Republicans out-organized us. It would be a monumental mistake to moderate our views on civil rights. Civil rights is civil rights is civil rights."

"We will never be on the wrong side of civil rights," Darrell added. "We may be ahead of our time."

However, Darrell stressed the importance of values in politics.

"Let's define values on our terms," he said.

"There may be something to be said how Republicans use values, as wrong headed as it is. We need to define Democratic values. We are afraid to talk about class. People are working hard, often two jobs, without health or retirement security. Democrats have not articulated as a values issues."

"These workers are getting the short-end of the stick with Bush. Instead of working for health care, we are giving tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. We have failed as Democrats to effectively articulate the economic divide as a values issue, and we must do so."

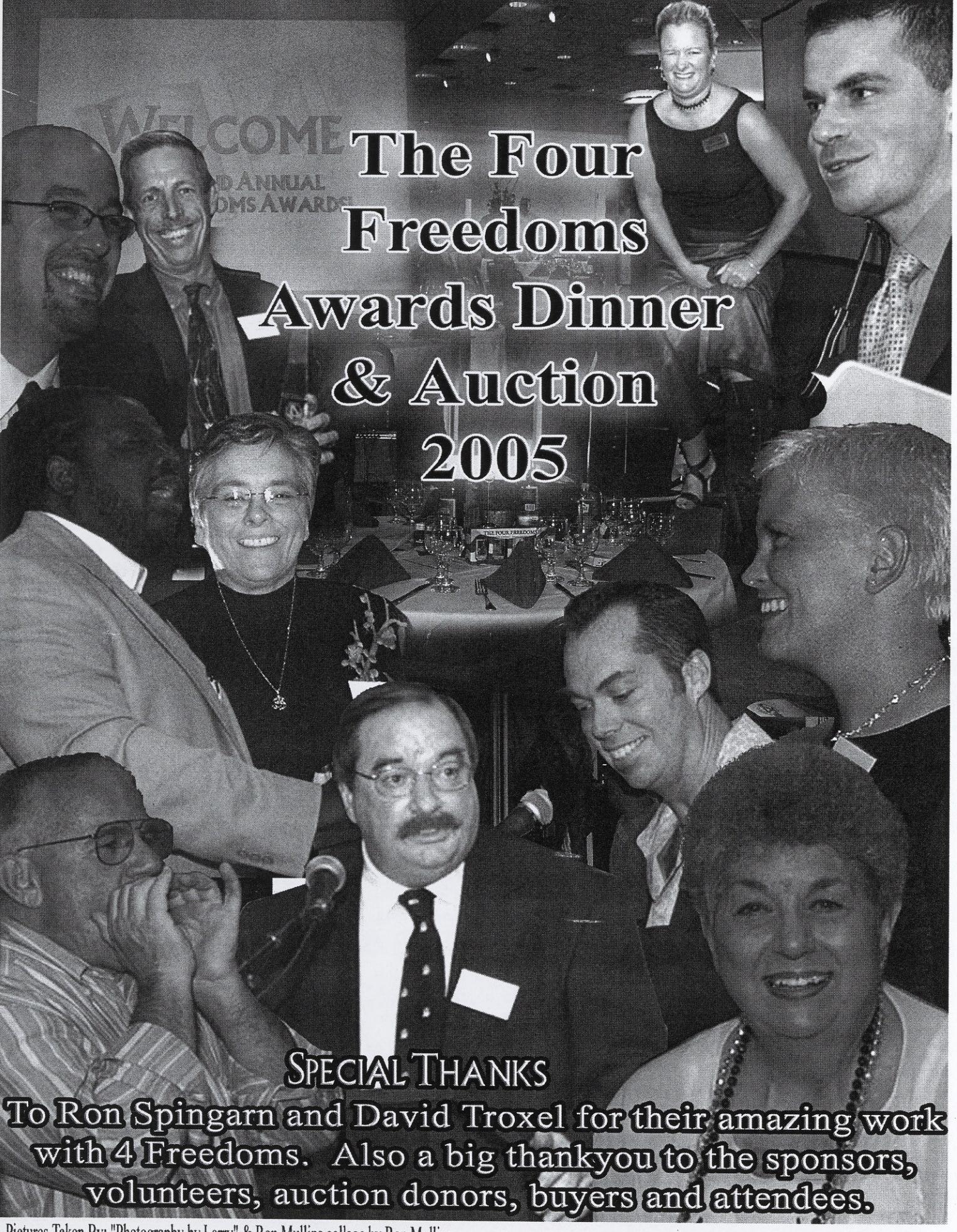
Stonewall has endorsed Darrell for his State Senate campaign, and I asked Darrell what we could do to aid on his campaign. Darrell recently had a campaign kick-off barbecue, and he noticed that even on a 105 degree summer day "Stonewall's representation was large and was there early."

He urged us to continue to build Stonewall, and when Darrell begins to re-vitalize voter registration in Sacramento county he hopes we would team up with him.

Indeed Darrell has always stood with California's LGBT community, whether advocating for domestic partner benefits on the city council, co-authoring and speaking in support of historic legislation like the Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act, supporting legislation that banned discrimination based on gender identity, pushing to make sure HIV-AIDS services were not cut in the budget, and working with Sacramento's LGBT community so our voices are heard in the legislature.



Darrell Steinberg, Dr. Darrick Lawson and Dan Roth



The Four Freedoms Awards Dinner & Auction 2005

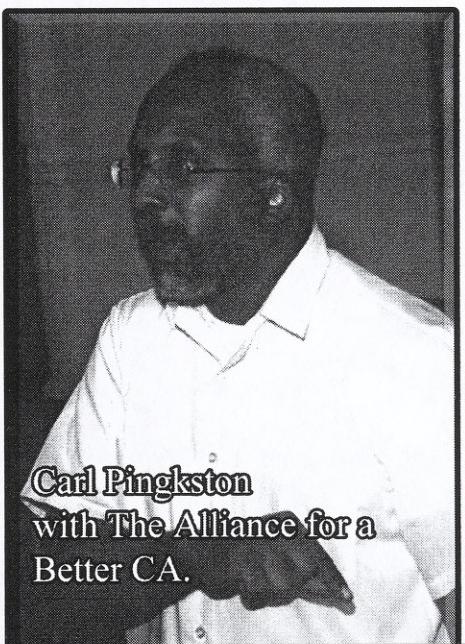
SPECIAL THANKS

To Ron Spingarn and David Troxel for their amazing work with 4 Freedoms. Also a big thank you to the sponsors, volunteers, auction donors, buyers and attendees.

Pictures Taken By: "Photography by Larry" & Ron Mullins collage by Ron Mullins



State Treasurer &
Candidate for CA Govenor
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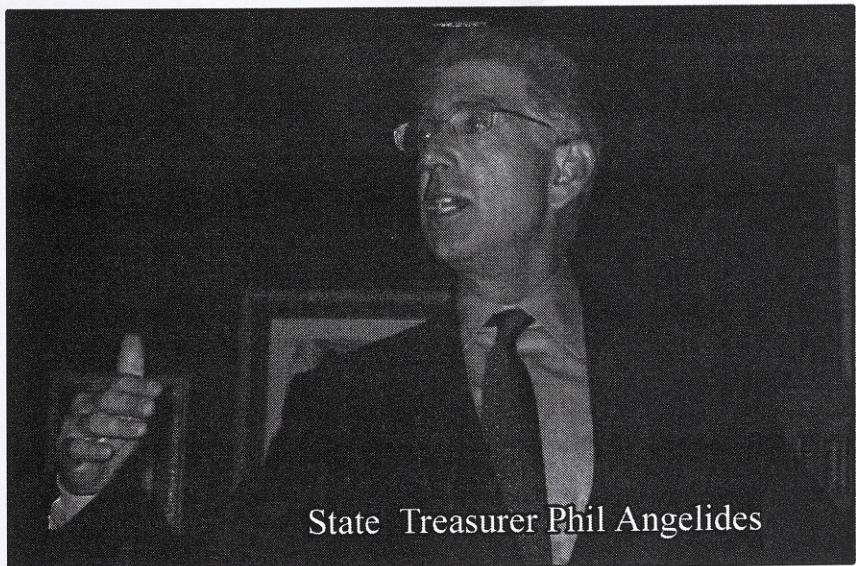
Dan Roth &
Senator Figueroa



Senator & Candidate for Lt. Governor Liz Figueroa.



Honored Speakers at the last Two Stonewall Meetings



State Treasurer Phil Angelides

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

APATHY AND YOU

My husband, Todd, and I attended a party where we were having a conversation with an adorable twenty something Gay couple. I mentioned something about my position as the Membership chair for Sacramento Stonewall and told them that they may want to join, because of the important work that we do, as an organization. I got a stare that resembled a deer in the headlights, followed by "I really am not very political". He wasn't even embarrassed to admit that! I was stunned by the answer. I would have rather been told that he was Republican. At least then, I could feel good that this person had examined the issues, but to say "I'm not very political" was like a kick in the head to me. I realized at that moment that we all have some very important work that we have to do and we need to do it quickly.

We, as Stonewall members, are in a unique position to help shape the future of politics in both the local Sacramento area, and the state of California. The time is now to get our friends, neighbors, and our families involved. We need the help. We are facing some of the most sweepingly undermining changes in laws, and attitudes toward the Lesbian, Gay, Transgendered and Bisexual communities ever.

Only by taking an active role in our community will we be able to incite change. We, as Sacramento Stonewall have the power of over 400 members. Do you understand how huge that is? And it needs to be bigger. We have to fight 3 ballot referendums this next year alone. These initiatives and their supporters are ready to strip us of our equality and deny us the successes that we have achieved so far.

We need to fight and in order to fight, we need people...people like you. People who care and can influence those around them. It's time to reach out to those that say "I'm just not very political" and make them understand the defeatist attitude generated by words like that. Everyone counts, everyone can help, and everyone has a voice. By increasing our membership, we insure that this will come to be. There is power in numbers and with that power we are more able to reach out to local politicians who we can count on to always do their best to ensure us of our continued visibility and equal rights. With that power, we are able to make our collective voices heard and make Sacramento and California stand up and take notice. To do this, we need your help.

Talk to your friends and make them understand the seriousness of our challenges in the next year. Make the uninvolved among them understand that, as much as they would like to continue on in their daily lives, unencumbered by political thought, they are being threatened, maybe not overtly, but subversively and that's so much more insidious and dangerous. There is no room for apathy now. We don't have that luxury.

Ed. Bennett
Membership Chair

3561642411-19 C007



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